School-Age Curricular Framework for YoungStar
3.22.12

A well-planned curriculum will help define a child's experience in a school-age program. Curriculum affects all aspects of a program: its overall quality, parent perceptions of the program, and the outcomes of the program on child development. By implementing a curriculum, a school-age program is more likely to achieve intended outcomes for the children. A well-defined curriculum, designed around the program goals and outcomes, also helps to give staff direction in planning a curriculum. This also keeps staff accountable for program and individual outcomes.

A school-age curriculum is a combination of what staff teach (goals and objectives), how they teach it (daily routines and activities), and the context in which the learning will take place (human interactions, child choice activities, group experience, outdoor play, and so on). School-age curricula vary from program to program. The following content areas have been determined by Wisconsin Afterschool Network (WAN) to be the framework for which school age programs should be exposed to. These complement the core subjects that children learn in school.

- Language, Literacy, and Numeracy – Language and Literacy include reading, writing, speaking, gathering information, using information, thinking critically, understanding other, and expressing oneself. Numeracy is reasoning with numbers and other mathematical concepts. Aspects of numeracy include number sense, operation sense, computation, measurement, geometry, probability and statistics. Efforts to embed this content across the content areas should be made in school age programs.
- Arts and Culture – dance, theatre, music, visual arts, other types of creative expression
- Global Learning – collaboration and communication with diverse audiences, investigate the world, translate ideas into actions to improve global conditions
- Health and Wellness – nurturing of competent, caring and responsible children and youth and promotion of healthy living and well-being
- Media and Technology – exploration of appropriate use of media, building and strengthening children's ability to make good choices in their daily use of media and technology
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education (STEM) - increase STEM access and opportunities
- Social Emotional Development/Character Education – integrate character education and social emotional development to reinforce core ethical values of respect, responsibility and citizenship
- Environmental Learning – increase knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges to foster attitudes, motivation, and commitments
- Service Learning – instructional approach to increase knowledge and skills while making positive contributions to the world

The content areas listed above generally take place in this context:
- Project-based, hands-on, and inquiry based
- Age Appropriate and developmentally appropriate
- Include 21st century skill-building and leadership activities

- Improve life skills and character education
- Integrated across multiple curriculum areas
- Conducted using a variety of group levels including individual work; small, cooperative group work; and full-group work
- Intentional in scope and sequence

Appreciating diversity and family support is woven into the framework.